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GENEALOGY.

THE ANCESTORS AND DESCENDANTS OF JOHN ROLFE WITH NOTICES OF SOME CONNECTED FAMILIES.

(CONTINUED.)

[Since this account was prepared the compiler has been informed that Mr. Wilson Miles Cary of Baltimore, the distinguished genealogist, who spent some time in England, thinks that he has discovered that John Rolfe, of Virginia, was not a son of John and Dorothea Rolfe, but belonged to another branch of the same family. The proof is not yet positive, but Mr. Cary is still having the matter investigated and has promised to give this Magazine the result of his researches]

JOHN ROLFE.

John Rolfe the son of John and Dorothea Rolfe married in England and sailed for Virginia in May 1609. The ship in which he came was wrecked on the Bermudas and here a daughter was born, who was named Bermuda and christened Feb. 11, 1609-10. They reached Virginia in May 1610 and Rolfe's wife and child had either died at the Bermudas or only lived a short time after reaching Virginia.

He became a prominent member of the Colony and is said to have been the first person to suggest the cultivation of tobacco. Early in April 1614 his celebrated marriage with Pocahontas took place. Though evidently greatly attached to her, he had wrestling in spirit (he had much of the Puritanism so prevalent in the eastern counties of England) before he could make up his mind to marry one of heathen birth.

He wrote to Governor Dale: "Nor am I out of hope but one day to see my countrie, nor so void of friends, nor mean of birth, but there to obtain a match to my great content"; but love was stronger than his fears. The curious and interesting letter referred to is most accessible in Meade's "Old Churches & Families of Virginia", I. 126-129.

In 1616 Rolfe and Pocahontas went to England and her reception there and the interest she excited are well known.

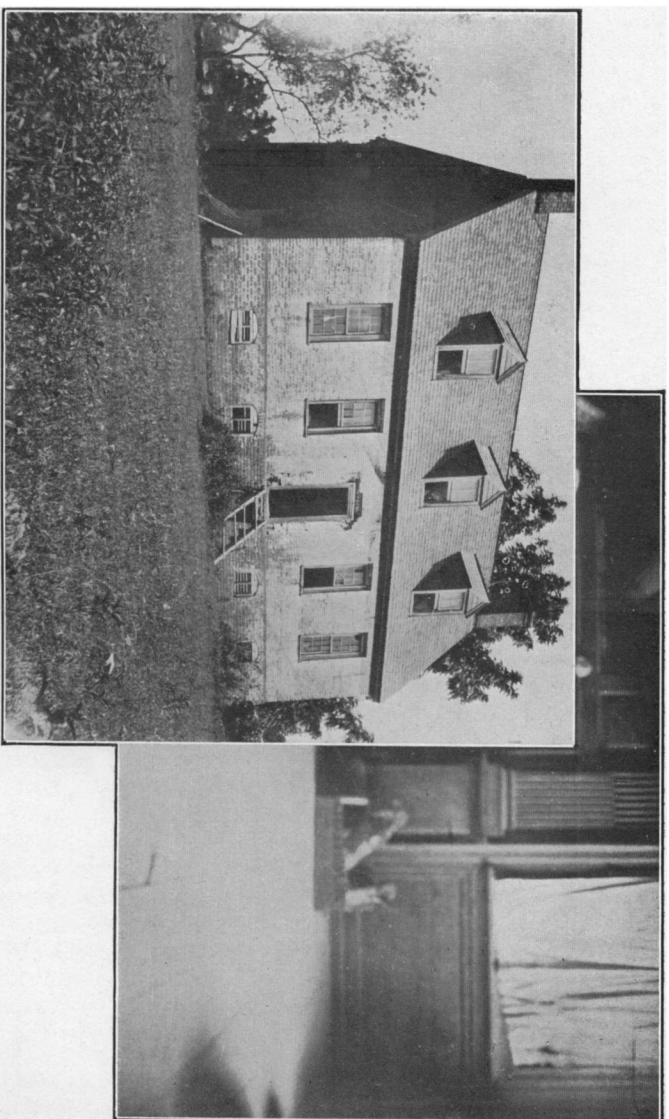
They were about to set sail for Virginia, on their return, when Pocahontas died at Gravesend and was buried in the Church there March 21, 1616-17. Some confusion has been caused by John Rolfe's



POCAHONTAS

From a photograph of the original portrait

Negative, property of
Cook, Photographer, Richmond



OLD WARREN HOUSE AT SMITH'S FORT—EXTERIOR AND INTERIOR VIEWS

name appearing on the register as "Thomas Wrolfe;" but this is no doubt to be accounted for by the fact that he was a stranger only at Gravesend to embark, and that the clerk or rector made a mistake in the name. The Virginia Society of Colonial Dames will at an early date erect a memorial to Pocahontas in Gravesend Church.

He tried to bring his infant son Thomas with him to Virginia; but when the ship touched at Plymouth it was obvious that the child could not stand the voyage, and he was left there with Sir Lewis Stukeley, until he could be transferred to the care of his uncle Henry Rolfe of London.

On his return to Virginia Rolfe wrote a letter to Sir Edwin Sandys dated Jamestown, June 8, 1617 in which he speaks of his grief at the death of Pocahontas and explains why he had to leave his son. This letter was printed in this Magazine X 134-138.

In the year 1617 Rolfe was appointed Recorder and Secretary General of the Colony, and in 1619 was a member of the Council. As a member of this body he sat in the first American legislature, the Virginia Assembly of 1619, and is the only member of that Assembly who is known to have descendants living at the present day. He married in or before 1620 Jane, daughter of Captain William Pierce (also of the Virginia Council) and had a daughter Elizabeth born 1620. John Rolfe died in 1622 and it is probable that he was killed in the great Indian Massacre of that year. In addition to the letters referred to Rolfe was the author of a "relation" of events in Virginia. Smith, Hamor and all of the early writers speak of him as an honest and worthy gentleman.

His will has been published (in abstract) in Waters' "Gleanings" and is as follows:

John Rolfe, of James City in Virginia, Esq., dated 10 March 1621, proved May 21, 1630 [in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury] by William Pyers [Pierce], Father-in-law William Pyers, gentleman, to have charge of the two small children of very tender age. A parcel of land in the Country of Tappahannah between two creeks over against James City in the Country or Continent of Virginia, to son Thomas Rolfe and his heirs, failing his issue to my daughter Elizabeth; [The land here bequeathed was no doubt the "Smiths Fort" tract], next to my right heirs. Land on Mulberry Island Virginia, to my wife Jane, during her natural life then to daughter Elizabeth. To my servant Robert Davies twenty pounds. Witnesses: Temperance Yeardley, Richard Buck, John Cartwright, Robert Davys and John Milwarde.

THOMAS ROLFE.

Thomas Rolfe, the son of John Rolfe and Pocahontas was born in Virginia in 1615 and was taken to England by his parents. When his mother died and his father returned to Virginia, in March 1616-17 he was left at Plymouth under the care of Sir Lewis Stukeley, who became

so notorious and generally detested for his treachery to Sir Walter Raleigh. Thomas Rolfe was afterwards removed to the care of his uncle Henry Rolfe, of London, who was a member of the Virginia Company. The boy remained with him for a number of years. On August 23rd 1618 the Virginia Company wrote to Governor Argall in Virginia. "We cannot imagine why you should give us warning that Opechankano and the natives have given the country to Mr. Rolfe's child and that they reserve it from all others until he comes of years." It would appear from this that the Indians were supposed to have intended that Thomas Rolfe should succeed to the chieftanship of the Powhatans.

In October 1622 Mr. Henry Rolfe petitioned the Virginia Company requesting that he be paid out of the estate of his brother John Rolfe for having brought up the son of his brother and Pocahontas. In a grant of land in 1635 to Captain William Pierce the name of Thomas Rolfe appears among the head rights. This probably indicates the time that he came to Virginia. He was then about twenty years old.

"He afterwards," says Stith, "became a person of fortune and distinction in the Colony." In 1641 he petitioned the Governor for permission to visit his aunt "Cleopatre and his Kinsman Opecanough." In 1646 as "Lieutenant Thomas Rolfe" he was granted Fort Chickahominy and 600 acres adjoining on condition of keeping a guard there. Between that date and 1663 he patented a number of other tracts of land. There is recorded in Surry County, in 1673, a deed dated June 20, 1654, from Thomas Rolfe to William Corker, conveying 120 acres in Surry, lying between "Smiths fort old field" and "the Devils' Woodyard," which was the property of Thomas Rolfe "by gift from the Indian King." It also appears from various depositions recorded in Surry that he at one time owned the plantation called "Smiths Fort," 1200 acres, at the mouth of Gray's Creek which he sold to Thomas Warren. One of the deponents states that he was present in 1654 with Mr. Thomas Rolfe in Mr. Warren's "fifty foot brick house" on "Smiths Fort" plantation soon after it was completed.

Warren's "Fifty foot brick house" is still standing, the oldest brick dwelling in Virginia to which a date can be assigned. The farm still called "Smiths Fort" now belongs to a prosperous negro farmer. In addition to the old house there is much of interest in the neighborhood. On John Smith's map of Virginia may be seen at the mouth of Gray's Creek opposite Jamestown, the inscription "The New Fort". Smith states that on 1608 or 1609 he built a fort as a place of refuge in case of being compelled to retreat from Jamestown "on a convenient river upon a high commanding eminence." It has been suggested foolishly, that this fort was the "Old Stone House" on Ware Creek in the upper part of James City County; but any retreat to this place would have been through dense forests which afforded ample cover for the Indians. It seems there can be no doubt that the fort Smith refers to was the "New Fort" on Gray's Creek, and that this was on the "Smith's Fort" tract. About



REMAINS OF EARTHWORKS AT SMITH'S FORT



VIEW FROM THE BLUFF AT SMITH'S FORT

a half mile from the brick house referred to is a high bluff, about the middle of a long bend in Gray's Creek. On the opposite side are wide marshes, and ravines at the sides of the bluff make it something of a promontory. Across the rear of the bluff traces of trenches can be distinctly seen, though the covering of leaves makes them, in the photograph, less distinct than they really are. There can be little doubt that we have here the remains of Smiths "New Fort."

Thomas Rolfe's wife is said (though there is no proof of the correctness of the statement) to have been a Miss Poythress, and he had an only child, Jane, who married in 1675 Col. Robert Bolling and died in 1676. Among the James City records (now destroyed) was the following deed, communicated to the "Southern Literary Messenger" by the once well-known Virginia antiquary, Richard Randolph: "This Indenture made 1st October 1698 between John Bolling of the County of Henrico and parish of Varina, Gent, son and heir of Jane late wife of Robert Bolling, of Charles City County, Gent, which Jane was the only child of Thomas Rolfe, dec'd, conveying to William Brown, of the parish of Wilmington, in the County of James City, one thousand acres of land commonly called the Fort on Chickahominy River, as per patent granted to Thomas Rolfe (this was Fort Chickahominy granted him in 1646).

Thomas Rolfe probably died in James City County, so the records in regard to his will death &c. have been destroyed along with all the records of that County.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

THE TURNER FAMILY OF KING GEORGE COUNTY &c.

(CONTINUED.)

7. HENRY SMITH ⁴TURNER (**Thomas**³), born 1770, died July 18, 1834, was first of Westmoreland County and afterwards of "Wheatland", Jefferson County; was a Justice of Westmoreland 1795, and member of the House of Delegates for that County in 1799 and 1800. He married first Lucy Hopkins (who had no issue) and, secondly, in 1796, Catherine, daughter of Col. Thomas Blackburn, of "Ripon Lodge" Prince William Co.

Issue: 11. **Thomas B**⁵. (of whom later); 12. Bushrod W⁵., appointed midshipman U. S. N. 1824, and was lost at sea Sept. 30, 1828; 13. Col. George W⁵., born 1810, graduated at West Point, served as Second lieutenant U. S. A., was in the Florida War and afterwards resigned. He was murdered by John Brown's party at Harper's Ferry, October 17, 1859. Never married; 14. **William Fauntleroy**⁵ (of whom later); 15. Mary, married—Allibone, of Philadelphia; 16. Jane, married Dr. Byrd; 17. Christine married Dr. Cordell; 18. Catherine, married Dr. Wright of Chicago.